

Maintenance. Let any Man then, who has the least Remains of Reason and Humanity, tho' he should be void of all Principles of Religion, lay his Hand upon his Heart, and make the Case of such a Parent his own. Let him consider what Indignation, what Anguish he himself should feel under the Weight of so afflicting, so irreparable an Injury. Few Parents, I am persuaded, but would rather, much rather, follow their Children to the Grave, than see them thus forfeit their own Peace and Happiness, and bring such an indelible Stain of Infamy upon their Family.

But if the sensual Libertine is regardless of the Afflictions of others ; yet, as Honour is his Boast, and Pleasure his Pursuit, he cannot, surely, be unaffected with what concerns the Dignity of his Nature, and the Happiness of his Life. Let him consider then, that unrestrained and criminal Indulgencies of this Kind peculiarly enervate the Body, and debase the Mind, and bring him upon a Level with the Brute Beasts, that have no Understanding : Reason, which was intended by the gracious Creator

Creator to direct and govern in the human Frame, is, by these Practices, enslaved to the Tyranny of the most contemptible of the Passions. When Men are given over to vile Affections, their Understandings become darkened; and it is seldom that they ever again recover the proper Government of themselves. The insatiable Appetite still rages through all the Infirmities of a distempered Body, and is not extinguished even by old Age : If indeed (which is very uncommon) they should happen to arrive at that Period. For we cannot but observe (and these Libertines, to their Sorrow, know) that there is a very dreadful Disease, which almost inseparably attends the Practice of this Sin, and makes them pay extremely dear for their sensual Enjoyments : A Disease which seems designed on Purpose by Providence to deter Mankind from the Folly and Danger of those destructive Pursuits ; which, like a consuming Poison, devours their Strength, undermines their Health, fills them with Pains and Tortures, and often sends them to the Grave, with the Infirmities of Age, before they have lived out half their Days. Few Confessors,

fors, in the Primitive Times of Persecution, ever suffered so much for their Religion, as these Martyrs of Sensuality do for their Vices. And if they happen to leave any Children, their Descendents, for many Generations, feel the cruel Effects of those four Grapes which their Fathers have wantonly devoured.

It were easy to multiply Arguments on this Subject : And considering what dangerous and numerous Temptations of this Kind, young Persons meet with at their first setting out in the World ; how many Seducers, especially in this corrupted City, lie in wait to entice them from the Paths of Peace and Virtue ; they cannot be secured against them by too watchful an Education, nor can we be too earnest in our Cautions, that they would escape, as *Lot* did out of *Sodom*, for their Life. It is the tenderest Compassion for the Souls of Men, to warn them, with our utmost Vehemence, against a Snare to which they are so much exposed, and from which it is so difficult to retreat. As for those who are already engaged in the Practice of this Sin ; if the Pains of a dis-

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tempered

tempered Body, and the Agonies of a guilty Soul ; as if neither Miseries in this World, nor the Dread of an avenging God in the next, can reclaim them, it is in vain to hope that any Thing else will.

These Considerations would be sufficient, one should think, to deter those who have the least Reflection, from this destructive Sin. And if the Arguments against Indulgencies of this Sort, are thus irresistibly cogent, and the Consequences thus evidently dreadful, in their less complicated State of Guilt ; with how much greater Force may they respectively be urged against the Practice of Impurity, when it breaks in upon the solemn and sacred Obligations of the Marriage Vow ?

Matrimony was an Institution of God himself. The Supreme Being appropriated the Husband and Wife to each other, in the State of Innocence. And even before the Delivery of the Law in *Sina*, this Institution was looked upon, by the Light of Reason, as sacred and inviolable. When the Impressions of Natural Religion

Religion were so far defaced, that it was necessary to renew them by express Revelation ; Adultery was very clearly and positively prohibited by that Law which was delivered to *Moses*, and written by the Hand of God himself. Our blessed Saviour was so far from cancelling this great Prohibition, both of Natural and Revealed Religion, that he extended it farther, and made it reach not only to our outward Actions, but to our very Thoughts and Conceptions : *Whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart* : The Intent of the Christian Religion being to sanctify us wholly, and to make us pure as our Father in Heaven is pure.

And great Reason there is, that the Marriage Contract should be thus firmly guarded : For when the Heart of a Husband can safely trust in his Wife, her Price is above Rubies. Blessed is the Man that hath a virtuous Wife, for the Number of his Days shall be double *.

With her he can lessen his Fears, divide his Cares, and soften his Sorrows. Her Love and

Faithfulness yields Balm to all his Wounds, and a Cordial under all his Afflictions. But when he is robbed of her Affections, that which should have been his Honour and Comfort, becomes his sorest Reproach and Calamity. And as our Saviour said, *If the Light that is in thee be Darkness, how great is that Darkness?* So here, if that which was designed to lighten a Man's Misfortunes, be turned into the heaviest Affliction, how severely unhappy must his Condition be? To endeavour to alienate the Affections of a Woman from her Husband, is an Injustice complicated with the foulest Baseness, and attended with the most aggravating Ingredients of Cruelty: An Injustice for which no Recompence can possibly be made*. It brings a Train of Confusion, Misery and Ruin into a whole Family; a spurious Brood is most injuriously brought in to share the Patrimony of the lawful Heirs, or perhaps the unhappy Children of this unlawful Love, are altogether neglected, and without any certain Relation to depend upon, are sent untutored and unprovided into the World, with a Mark

* See *The Religion of Nature delineated*.

of Infamy, which, tho' they are not necessary to, they can never wipe off. In a Word, this Sin is so abominable in its own Nature, and so tragical in its Consequences, that there is no thinking of it without Horror; nor is it possible to paint it in Colours black enough to shew its Deformity.

And as the Injury to Man is irreparable, so how odious the Offence is to Almighty God, is evident, from the severe Penalties denounced against it, both in the Old and New Testaments. Nay, sometimes this great Wickedness hath been punished in an exemplary Manner, by an immediate Vengeance from Heaven, in-
 somuch, that whole Nations have felt the dismal Effects of it. * And would it not become us, in order to prevent our Ruin, to enquire, whether the Judgments we of this Nation have lately suffered, have not, in some Measure, been owing to the Increase of the Sins of Uncleaness, together with those of every other Kind, among us? Whether the contagious Distemper still raging among one Part of the
 Brute

* This and the following Paragraph were omitted in the Delivery.

Brute Creation appointed for our Food, be not an Awakening Call on us to a general Repentance ? without which we have too much Reason to expect that GOD will be avenged on such a Nation as this. But supposing no visible Affliction either from Heaven or Earth seizes such heinous Offenders ; supposing their Wickedness be so craftily carried on, that they escape in this World with Impunity, except from the Reproaches of their own Consciences : Yet, in the other Life, Vengeance will not fail to attend them, unless they avert it by a sincere and timely Repentance. For, *Be not deceived, neither Fornicators nor Adulterers shall inherit the Kingdom of GOD.* 1 Cor. vi. 9. Can we suppose, indeed, that Souls so polluted, are in a Condition to be admitted into those happy Regions, where all is Innocence and unspotted Purity ? The Gospel plainly assures us, that without Holiness no Man shall see the LORD. How wretched, how imprudent a Choice do we then make, when, for the indulging ourselves in the sinful Gratifications of this present Life, which are but for a Moment, we forfeit the Vision and Enjoyment of the ever-

ever-blessed GOD, in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy, and at whose Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore. Pleasures as large as our Capacities, and as lasting as our Natures.

Let us then, as we value our present Happiness, and our future Salvation, look (as I hope we all do) with the utmost Horror and Indignation on these enormous and detestable Iniquities ; and avoiding all Tendencies towards them, endeavour *to perfect Holiness in the Fear of GOD*. An universal Chastity, both in Thought, Word, and Deed, is our undoubted Duty ; and to guard against all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, should be our continual Care.

It highly imports us therefore, to fly all Opportunities and Temptations to Immodesty. Particularly, it concerns all those who would secure their Innocence, and walk worthy of their Christian Profession, to avoid all filthy Communication, and the reading of such Books as are filled with Stories of infamous Gallantry,
and

and to abstain from such Dramatic Entertainments, as are an Offence to good Manners, and inflame the impurer Passions : But more especially, to fly from those fashionable Assemblies, which seem calculated for no other End, but to promote the Purposes of Lewdness : Assemblies so very low and ridiculous, that they are not more a Snare to Virtue than a Reproach to common Sense.

The more easily to escape these Temptations, it will be necessary to apply diligently to some beneficial Employment or useful Study : And, God be thanked ! there are proper Employments and Studies for every Rank and Station. Did Men pursue their several Callings with Industry and Attention, it would prevent many of those Scenes of Debauchery which are now too common in the World : They would hardly find Leisure even for impure Thoughts, much less to carry them into Execution. But, when they are so unhappy as to have Time lye heavy upon their Hands, 'tis more than probable that their depraved Appetites will find Employment for them.

To Diligence should be added Temperance. Intemperance raises and inflames the Passions; and not only renders the Appetites more mutinous and untractable, but Reason likewise less able to govern them. On the contrary, a Man who lives in a constant Course of Sobriety, and occasionally adds to it religious and prudential Mortifications, will be able to conquer those irregular Appetites, which would otherwise grow too strong for Opposition:

Especially, if he joins to this an earnest and frequent Address to God to strengthen his Endeavours, by the Assistance of his powerful Grace. For we are not to think we are sufficient of ourselves, to conquer any vicious Desire, or to establish any Habit of Virtue. But our Help and Confidence is in our Almighty Creator, who has promised his Assistance to those who sincerely implore it. He will give his Grace to them that ask it: We should therefore most fervently intreat him to make us clean Hearts, and to renew a right Spirit within us.

The last Thing I would recommend to you, in this Case, and which my Text more particularly suggests to me, is, to live under a constant Sense of the Presence of GOD, and an awful Fear of displeasing him. The lascivious Offender generally retires to Darkness for Shelter, and imagines that no Eye sees him. Mistaken Man ! There is no such Thing as Privacy : GOD is about thy Bed, and about thy Paths, and spies out all thy Ways. How little then does he gain by concealing himself from mortal Eyes ? since GOD sees him, to whom he must give an Account, and who will, for these his Offences, most assuredly bring him into Judgment. *A Man that breaketh Wedlock, saying thus in his Heart, who seeth me ; I am compassed about with Darkness, the Walls cover me, what need I to fear ? Such a Man only feareth the Eyes of Men, and knoweth not that the Eyes of GOD behold all the Ways of Men.* Ecclus. xxiii. 18.

Did we, my Brethren, live under an habitual Sense of the Omnipresence of our great Creator; did we remember that our impartial Judge is ever around us, and privy to all our Thoughts, Words and Actions; how careful should we be of offending, tho' concealed in the closest Retirement? This one Reflection would furnish us with an unanswerable Argument against all Sin, at all Times and in all Places. It was by means of this Consideration, that the faithful *Joseph* repelled the Temptation. He had just Apprehensions of his Duty to GOD, was under the full Persuasion that he observed him, had a pious Dread of offending him, and knew that nothing could countervail his Displeasure; and hence he was enabled to resist and to conquer. *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against GOD?* To take off the Force of this Objection no Argument can possibly be offered. And may these Principles be so deeply engraven on all our Hearts, as to conquer every wicked Suggestion that may arise in them! May the Fear of GOD be perpetually before our Eyes, and his continual Presence
and

and Inspection be so lively in our Thoughts, as to inspire us with a Resolution like this of faithful *Joseph*, to maintain an unperturbed Innocence, and to resist every Temptation to Sin and Folly. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant.

F I N I S.



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A
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the *694. g. 19*
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C O N V O C A T I O N

A T
St. *Paul's* Church *London*,
In the Year 1511.

By J O H N C O L E T, D. D.
And Dean of the said Church.

Humbly offer'd to the Consideration of the
present Convocation.

part of it quoted in Latin by Archbishop Right. (2. 81)
The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,
Reprinted for J. Nutt near Stationers-Hall, 1701.

SERMON
Preach'd before the
CONVOCAATION

AT

St. Paul's Church London
In the Year 1711.

By JOHN COLE, D.D.
And Dean of the Church



Humbly offer'd to the Consideration of the
present Convocation.

By the Dean of the Church

Printed for J. Sturges at the ...

The Publisher to the Reader.

THE Sample which the Reverend Dr. Atterbury was pleas'd lately to give of the following Sermon, appear'd to me so very well suited to our present Circumstances, that I was very desirous to see the whole. Which when I had obtain'd I thought that all of it deserved to be published as well as a part.

I take this Opportunity humbly to offer it to the Consideration of the present Convocation; whether the putting in Execution the wise and good Laws of our Church, which are now so generally and freely broken and dispensed with by almost all degrees in it, be not what would effectually remove the Disorders we complain of; and accordingly what deserves their joynt and hearty Endeavours to enforce. It seems to me that as long as this Neglect is permitted, the Goodness and Excellency of our Ecclesiastical Constitution will not be observed; nor shall we be able by all our vindications of it to make Men esteem what by our Actions we seem to disapprove.

That all Orders in this our Church may so act as the Rules of it require, as it is the only design of publishing this Discourse, so it is the hearty Prayer of

Octob. 11.
1701.

Yours, &c.

Part of the

PREFACE to the **READER,**
As 'twas Publish'd 1661.

Conforming and Reforming is
now the Talk of every Man
in this Kingdom. Some are
very zealous for the one without the
other: Our Doctor is for both con-
jointly, but yet in due order. He would
have us first obey the Laws of Christ,
our great Law-maker, and then the
Canons of the Church: and not without
reason. For if the Church be the
Body of Christ, I would fain learn
from our Nonconformists, why we may
not give as much reverence and obedi-
ence to the Laws of the Church, as we
must

Rom. 12.

5. 1 Cor.

10. 17, and

12, 13.

Eph. 2. 16.

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To the Reader.

must to the *Laws* of each little Corporation. The contrary Position hath occasion'd the great increase of Fanaticks in this Realm. — — —

I have lately seen two small Pieces in 8^o on the same Subject with this Sermon of Dr. Colet, which I wish were reprinted together, viz. *Stimulus Pastorum per Bartholomœum a Martyribus Hispaniæ Primatem, Parisiis 1586.* And *Oratio Gentiani Herveti de reparandâ Ecclesiasticorum disciplinâ, Brixie 1563.* From which, and the like Considerations, it is manifest enough to me, that the want of putting old Canons in execution, is the chief cause of almost all the Schisms and Heresies which now rend asunder the Christian World; [and of all the Disorders which are so complain'd of in the Christian Church.]

If

To the Reader.

If any object, That these Times will not bear the publishing of such Books here: I answer, That I hope better things, that our Church-men are not so bad as our Enemies do paint them: And that I have no other design in publishing this Paper, but to stop them, as much as lies in me, from being so; knowing that Prosperity is too apt to make even pious Men forget themselves, and stand in need of a friendly Remembrancer. Many not being able to bear abundance, *Esther* 16. 3. But for my part if ever I hear this Objection, which I hope I shall not, I shall think it hugely strange, that we who call our selves Reformed in contradistinction to the Papists should not be able to brook what they printed, cum privilegio, concerning Reformation; and that from this very Objection it will be most clear, either

To the Reader.

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ther that they are not so bad, or that we are not so good as we pretend: and considering our Afflictions may well afford to be. That Almighty God of his Infinite Mercy may mend us all is the daily Prayer of

Chr. Col. June 11,
1661

Tho. Smith.

Dr.

Dr. HAMMOND *his Considerations, of present
use concerning Church-Government, Printed 1644.*
P. 12.

IT is now my Solemn Petition both to God and Man,
That the Power of the Keys, and the exercise of that
Power, The due use of Confirmation, and, previous to that
examination and trial of Youth, a strict search into the Man-
ners and Tempers, and Sufficiencies of those that are to be
admitted into Holy Orders, and to be licentiate for pub-
lick Preachers, The Visitation of each Parish in each Di-
ocess, and the exercise of Church Discipline upon all Of-
fenders, together with painful, mature, and sober Preach-
ing; and Catechising, Studies of all Heads and Parts of
Theological Learning (Languages, Controversies, Writings
of the Schools, and Casuists, &c.) may be so far taken
into Consideration by our *Law-Makers*, and so far con-
sidered in the collating Church Preferments and Dignities
So much of Duty required in Clergymen, and so little
left arbitrary or at large, That every Church Preferment
in this Kingdom may have such a due Burden annexed to
it, That no ignorant Person shall be able, no lazy or lux-
uriant Person willing or forward to undergo it.

SERMON

OF

Dr. Colet Dean of St. Paul's

BEFORE

The Convocation in the Year 1511.

YE are this Day come together (Fathers, and right wise Brethren) to enter into Council, in which what ye will do, and what Matters ye will handle we do not yet understand. But we wish that once remembering your Name and Profession, ye would mind the Reformation of Ecclesiastical Affairs. For, assure your selves there never was more need of it, the state of the Church did never more desire your Endeavours. The Spouse of Christ whom ye would should be without Spot, or Wrinkle, is made deformed and ill-favoured; as saith *Isaiah*, *The faithful City is become an Harlot*, chap. 1. ver. 21. *She hath played the Whore with many Lovers*, Jer. 3. 1. whereby she hath conceived many Seeds of Wickedness, and daily bringeth forth very foul Fruit. Wherefore I come hither to day, Fathers, to warn you, that in this your Council ye bestow your whole Thoughts upon the *Reformation* of the Church.

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But

But indeed I came not willingly, being sufficiently conscious of my own unworthiness; and foreseeing how hard it will be to please the precise Judgment of so many Men. I esteem'd it very unmeet, almost too malapert, that I a *Servant* should counsel my *Lords*; that I a *Son* should teach you my *Fathers*. Truly this had been more fit for some one of the *Fathers* themselves; that is to say You *Prelates* might have done it with far more grave Authority and greater Wisdom. But the Command of the most Reverend Father and Lord the *Arch-Bishop*, President of this Council, who laid upon me this Burden, which is in truth too heavy for my *Shoulders*, must be obeyed: For I remember that the Prophet *Samuel* said, *Obedience is better than Sacrifice*. Wherefore I pray and beseech you to sustain my Weakness with your Goodness and Patience; in the first place to help me with your good Prayers. And before all things, *Let us pray to God the Father Almighty: First remembring our most Holy Father the Pope, and all Spiritual Pastors, with all Christian People; furthermore the Most Reverend Father, and Lord the Arch-Bishop President of this Council, and all Bishops, and all the Clergy, and all the People of England; remembring finally this your Convocation; desiring God to enspirit your Minds so accordingly to agree, to the Benefit and Fruit of the Church, that ye may not seem when the Council is finish'd, to have been gather'd together in vain, and without Cause. Let us all say, Our Father, &c.*

To exhort you, *Reverend Fathers*, to endeavour Reformation, because nothing hath so disfigured the Face of the Church, as hath the Fashion of Secular and Worldly Livings in Clerks and Priests: I know not where more conveniently to begin my Discourse than from the Apostle *Paul*, in whose Church ye are now met together. For he writing to the *Romans*, and under their Name to you, saith,

ROM. 12. 2.

Be not conformed to this World: but be ye reformed by the renewing of your Mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect Will of God.

THis the Apostle writ to all Christian Men, but most chiefly to Bishops and Priests. Priests and Bishops are the Light of the World. For Christ said unto them *Ye are the Light of the World*: And He said also, *If the Light that is in you be Darknes, How great is that Darknes?* That is, If Priests and Bishops who should be as Lights, run in the dark way of the World, How dark then shall the People of the World be? Wherefore St. Paul said chiefly to Priests and Bishops, *Be ye not conformed to this World, but be ye reformed.*

In which Words the Apostle doth two things.

First, He *forbids*; that we be not conform'd to this World, and become carnal; and then,

Secondly, He *commands*; that we be reformed in the Spirit of God, and become Spiritual.

Intending to follow this order: I shall speak first of Conformation, and then of Reformation. *Be not conformed to this World.* By the word *World*, the Apostle meaneth the ways, and manner of secular living, which chiefly consist in four Evils of this World: That is, in *Devillish* Pride,

Dr. Colet's Convocation Sermon,

Pride, Carnal Lust, Worldly Covetousness, and Secular Business. These are in the World, as St. John witnesseth, 1 Epist. 2. 16. For he saith, *All that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, — is of the World.* These same things now are, and reign in the Church and Ecclesiastical Persons : So that we may seem truly to say ; All that is in the Church is either the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, or Pride of Life:

1. And first, to speak of *Pride of Life.* How much greediness, and desire of Honour and Dignity is seen now a-days in Clergymen ! How run they almost out of Breath, from one Benefice to another, from the less to the greater, from the lower to the higher ? Who seeth not this, and who feeling sorroweth not ? And many of those who are in these Dignities carry their Heads so high, and are so stately, that they seem not to be put in the humble Bishoprick of Christ, but rather in the high Lordship and Power of the World ; not knowing, or not minding what Christ, the Master of all Meekness, said unto his Disciples, whom he called to be Bishops and Priests : *The Princes of the Gentiles exercise Dominion over them, and they that are great exercise Authority upon them ; but it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your Minister ; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your Servant.* Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, Mat. 20. 25, &c. By which Words our Saviour doth plainly teach, That a Prelacy in the Church is nothing else but a Ministration ; That an high Dignity in an Ecclesiastical Person, ought to be nothing but a meek Service.

2. The second secular Evil is *Carnal Concupiscence* : And hath not this Vice grown and encreased in the Church so far, that in this most busie Age, the far greater Number of

preach'd at St. Paul's, in the Year 1511.

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of Priests mind nothing but what does delight and please their Senses? They give themselves to Feasts and Banqueting, spend their time in vain-babbling, are addicted to Hunting and Hawking, and in a word, drowned in the Delights of this World; diligent only in proggng for those Lusts they set by. Against which sort of Men St. Jude exclaims in this Epistle; saying, *Wo unto them which have gone in the way of Cain; they are foul and beastly, feasting on their Meats, without fear feeding themselves: Floods of the wild Sea foaming out their own Shame; unto whom the Storm of Darknes is reserved for Everlasting.* Jude Epist. v. 12, 13.

3. *Covetousness* is the third secular Evil, which St. John calls the *Lust of the Eyes*, and St. Paul *Idolatry*. This abominable Pestilence has so entred into the Minds of almost all Priests, hath so blinded the Eyes of their Understanding, that we see nothing but that which seemeth to bring unto us some Gain. What other thing seek we now-a-days in the Church, except fat Benefices, and high Promotions? And it were well if we minded the duty of those when we have them: But he that hath many great Benefices, minds not the Office of one small one. And in these high Promotions what other things do we value, but only our Tythes and our Rents? We care not how vast our Charge of Souls be. How many, or how great Benefices we take, so they be of large value. Oh Covetousness! Covetousness! St. Paul justly calleth thee *the Root of all Evil*. Of thee cometh this heaping of Benefices upon Benefices. Of thee so great Pensions assigned for many Benefices resigned. Of thee so much sueing for Tithes, for Offerings, for Mortuaries, for Dilapidations by the Right and Title of the Church: for which things we contend as eagerly as for our Lives. O Covetousness! Of thee it cometh that the Visitations of Bishops are so chargeable. Of thee the Corruptions of their Courts, and those daily new Inventions wherewith the poor People are Vid. Exhortation in the Office for ordaining of Priests.
Vid. Confecration of Bishops.
so

Dr. Colet's Convocation Sermon,

so vexed. O Covetousness! the Mother of all Iniquity! Of thee cometh the Insolence, and Sauciness of *Officials*. Of thee this fervent desire of *Ordinaries*, to enlarge their Jurisdictions. Of thee this peevish and raging Contention of Ordinaries about the Registering of Wills. Of thee come undue Sequestrations. Of thee the *Superstitious* Observance of those Laws which bring in *Gain* by the Execution of them, whilst those are neglected and despised, which concern *the amendment of Manners*. Why should I rehearse the rest? To be short, and to conclude in one word. All Corruption, and decay of the Church, all the Offences and Scandals of the World, come from the Covetousness of the Priests. According to that of St. Paul, which here I repeat again, and beat into your Ears; *Covetousness is the Root of all Evil*.

4. The fourth secular Evil that spotteth the Face of the Church, is *continual secular Occupation*: Wherein Priests and Bishops now-a-days do busy themselves becoming the *Servants rather of Men, than of God*; the Warriours rather of this *World*, than of *Jesus Christ*. For the Apostle St. Paul writeth to Timothy, 2 Epist. 2. 3. *That no Man who is a good Soldier of Christ, or that warreth for God, entangleth himself with the Affairs of this Life, is troubled with secular Business*. The Warfare of God's Soldier is not *carnal*, but *spiritual*. Our warring is to pray devoutly, to read and study the Scriptures diligently, to preach the Word of God sincerely, to administer the Holy Sacraments rightly, and offer Sacrifice for the People; for we are Mediatours and Intercessours unto God for Men: Which St. Paul witnesseth, writing to the Hebrews. *Every Bishop, saith he, taken of Men, is ordained for Men in those things that be unto God, that he may offer Gift: and Sacrifices for Sins*. Wherefore the Apostles that were the first Priests and Bishops, did so much abhor all manner of meddling in secular things that they would not minister the Meat that was necessary to poor People, altho
it

it was a great Work of Vertue; but they said, *it is not meet that we should leave the Word of God and serve Tables, we will give our selves continually to Prayer, and preaching the Word of God, Acts 6. 2, 4.* And St. Paul tells the Corinthians, 1 Ep. 6. 4. *If ye have Judgment of things pertaining to this Life, set them to be Judges that be most in contempt in the Church.* Many Evils doubtless do ensue from this Secularity, when Clergy-men and Priests, leaving all Spirituality, busy themselves with worldly Employments.

First, The Dignity of the Priesthood is dishonoured, which is greater than either that of Kings or Emperours, and equal to that of Angels. But the brightness of this great Dignity is very much shadowed when Priests are employed in earthly things, who ought to *have their Conversation in Heaven.*

Secondly, The Priesthood is despised when there is no difference between such *Priests* and *Lay-people*; but according to the Prophecy of Hosea; *As are the People, so are the Priests.*

Thirdly, The beautiful Order, and holy Dignity in the Church is confounded, when the highest in the Church do meddle with vile and earthly things; and on the contrary, vile and abject Persons do exercise high and heavenly things.

Fourthly, The Lay-People have Offence given them, and a Block is laid in their way to cause them to fall into Sin; when those Men whose duty it is to draw others from the Affection of this World, do by their continually conversing in this World teach Men to love the World: and by the love of this World cast them down headlong into Hell.

Besides,

Besides, in such Priests that are so employed, there must needs follow Hypocrisy. For, when they are so mixed and confounded with Lay-People under the Garment, and Habit of a Priest; they live plainly after the Lay-fashion. And this spiritual Weakness, Bondage, and Fear, being made weak with the Waters of this World; they dare neither do nor say any thing but what they know is pleasing and grateful to their Princes. Hence too proceeds Ignorance and Blindness, when being blinded with the darkness of this World, they see nothing but earthly things. Wherefore, Our Saviour Christ, not without cause, did warn the Prelates of his Church in this manner. *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Gluttony and Drunkenness, and the Cares of this World; Luke 21. 34. The Cares,* saith he, *of this World:* Wherewith when the Hearts of Priests are sore charged, they cannot mind the other Life, nor lift up their Souls to high and heavenly things. There are many other Evils besides these that follow of the Secularity of Priests, which were long here to rehearse; but I make an end.

These are the four Evils that I have spoken of, O Fathers and Priests, by which we are *conformable to this World*, by which the Face of the Church is become deformed, and by which the State of it is destroyed, much more truly than it was in the beginning by the Persecution of Tyrants, or afterward by the Invasion of Hereticks that followed. For in the Persecution of Tyrants, the Church being afflicted, became stronger and brighter: In the Invasion of Hereticks, the Church being shaken, became wiser and more skillful in Holy Writ: But since this Secularity was brought in, since this Worldly manner of living crept in among Church-men, the Root of all spiritual Life, *i. e.* Charity hath been extinct: which being taken away, the Church can neither be wise nor strong in God.

In this Age we are sensible of the Contradiction of Lay People. But *they* are not so much contrary to *us*, as *we* are to *our selves*. Their Opposition hurteth us not so much as the Opposition which arises from our own evil Lives; which are contrary both to God and Christ, who said, *He that is not with me, is against me*. We are also now-a-days troubled with Hereticks, Men intoxicated with strange Opinions; but the Heresies of them are not so pestilent and pernicious to us and the People, as the wicked Lives of Priests, which, if we believe St. Bernard, is a kind of Heresy, nay, the chief of all, and most dangerous. For that holy Father preaching in a certain Convocation to the Priests of his time, had these words in his Sermon. *Many Men are Catholick in their speaking, and preaching, who are Hereticks in their Lives and Actions. For what the Hereticks do by evil teaching, the same do these Men by ill Example, viz. they lead the People out of the right way, and bring them into Errour of Life. And these Men are so much worse than Hereticks, by how much their Works prevail more than the others Words.* This that holy Father St. Bernard spoke, with a fervent Spirit against the Sect of evil Priests in his time. By which words he sheweth plainly, that there are two kinds of Heresies, one arising from perverse teaching, and the other from a wicked Life. Of which two this latter is far worse, and more dangerous, and which reigns now in Priests who do not live like themselves, not Priestly, but Worldly, to the utter and miserable destruction of the Church of God. Wherefore you Fathers and Priests, and all you of the Clergy, at last rouze and look up from this your sleep in this forgetful World: and being well awaked, hear St. Paul crying unto you, *Be ye not conformed to this World.* Thus much for the first Part; Let us come now to the second.

II. The second thing that St. Paul commandeth, is *That we be reformed by the renewing of our Mind, &c.*

C

Let

Let us be reformed in those Vices which are in us contrary to those Vertues I mentioned even now: *i. e.* to *Meekness*, to *Sobriety*, to *Charity*, and to *Spiritual Occupation*. That as the said *St. Paul* writeth unto *Titus*, *Denying all Ungodliness, and Worldly Lusts, we may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.*

But this Reformation, and restoring the Churches State ought to be * begun by *You Our Fathers*, and so be handed down to Us Your Clergy. You are the Heads, *You* are an Example of Living to Us. To *You* we look as to Marks set for our Direction. In *You* and in Your Lives we desire to read, as in living Books, how and after what manner *we our selves* ought to live. Wherefore if you have a mind to see the *Motes that are in our Eyes*, first pluck the Beam out of your own Eyes. 'Tis an Old Proverb, *Physitian heal thy self*. Let me beseech you *Spiritual Physicians*, first to take your selves this Purgation of Manners, and then afterwards offer us the same to take.

Now the way whereby the Church may be reformed into a better fashion, is *not to make new Laws*. There are already Laws enough, if not too many. *Nothing is new under the Sun*, as saith *Solomon*, *Ecc. 1. 9.* The Evils that are now in the Church were before in times past, and there is no fault committed among us, for which our Fore-fathers have not provided very good Remedies. There are no Offences, but there are Remedies against them in the Body of the Canon Law. There is no need then that any new Laws and Constitutions be made; but that those which are made already be well kept, and put in execution. Wherefore, I pray you, let those Canons, and Laws which are made be called for, and rehearsed before you in this your Assembly; those Canons I mean that restrain Vice, and further Virtue.

First,

First, Let those Canons be recited which warn you, O Fathers! * *not to lay Hands suddenly on any Man*, not to be too *easy* in admitting Persons into Holy Orders. For here lies the Original, and Spring-head of all our Mischiefs, that the Gate of Ordination is too broad, the Entrance too wide and open; every one that offers himself is admitted every where without putting back. Hence it comes that we have such a Multitude of Priests, who have little Learning, and less Piety. In my Judgment, it is not enough for a Priest to construe a Collect, to put forth a Question, and to answer a Sophism: but an honest, pure, and holy Life, is much more necessary. A Priest should be of approved Manners, of competent Learning in Holy Scripture, and having some Knowledge of the Sacraments: But chiefly, and above all things he should be possess'd with the true Fear of God, and the Love of an heavenly Life.

* Vid. Lib. quorund. Canonum. An. 1571. de Episcop. & Constat. Ecclesiast. 1603. Can. 34, 35. Artic. pro Clero 1584. ut homines idonei ad sacros ordines, &c. admittantur.

Let the Canons be recited which enjoin that † Ecclesiastical Benefices be conferr'd on such as are worthy of them, and that Promotions be made by the right ballance of Vertue, not by nearest Kindred, or carnal Affection, or Acceptance of Persons: Whereby it happeneth now a-days that Boys, and Fools, and ill Livers, do rule and govern in the Church instead of old Men, and Wise and Good.

† Lib. Canonum 1571. Can. cui titulus Patroni & Proprietarii. Art. pro Clero 1584. ut homines idonei ad Eccles. Beneficia admittantur. Can. 1603. num. 35.

To this end let the Canons be recited which forbid and oppose all † Simoniacal Corruption: Which, like an infection, hated and deadly Plague, doth creep abroad, and like a Canker eat the Minds of Priests. So that in these days many are not afraid, by entreaty, and servile Attendance, by Rewards and Promises to procure to themselves great Dignities.

† Lib. Can. 1603. Can. 40. Q. Eliz. in junct.

Let the Canons be recited that command † Personal Residence of Curates in their Churches. For of this many

An. 1559. † Lib. Can. 1571. Can. cui titulus Residentia Can. 1603. Evils No. 41.